魔法少女育成計画

JOKERS

遠藤浅蜊
Endou Asari
illustration マルイノ

宝島社

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ピュアエレメンツ

スノーホワイト

グリムハート
シャッフリン

プリズムチェリー

クェイクはきっと
デッサン上手なんでおね。
クェイクに反法少女のかき方を
教わりたいなと思いました。
クェイクに負けないように
反法少女を素敵にかける
ようになるぞ——
ありがとうございました!!
どこからが入らない…マルイ。

プリンセス・
テンペスト
風の力を使って
敵と戦うよ
プリンセス・
デリュージ
水の力を使って
敵と戦うよ
プリンセス・
インフェルノ
火の力を使って
敵と戦うよ
プリンセス・
クエイク
土の力を使って
敵と戦うよ
プリズムチェリー
鏡に映し出すものを自由に変えられるよ

袋井魔梨華
頭にいろんな魔法の
花を咲かせるよ
スノーホワイト
困っている人の心の
声が聞こえるよ
スタイラー美々
魔法のコーディネートで
身だしなみを整えるよ
レディ・ブロウド
自分の血を好きな液体に
変えられるよ
スタンチッカ
魔法の大道芸で
みんなをびっくりさせるよ
アンブレン
なんでも受け止める魔法の傘を使うよ

ウッタカッタ
不思議なシャボン玉を
作ることができるよ
グリムハート
礼儀知らずは
相手にしないよ
シャッフリン
マークや数字によって
能力が変わるよ
フィルルゥ
魔法の針と糸で
なんでも縫いつけるよ
カフリア
誰が一番早く死ぬのかわかるよ

Magical Girls Wanted!

Have you ever wanted to be a Magical Girl? Not just girls, but boys can apply too!

Becoming a Magical Girl used to be so hard! A person must have the right motivations, willpower, character, and heart, to become a real Magical Girl.

Plus, what really determines the factor of your choice is your *Magical Potential*.

Your Magical Potential is how much room for growth you have, at least in terms of magic! Your powers as a Magical Girl grow faster the more potential you have!

It's easy to find Magical Girl candidates among children, all the way up till the age of 20 or so.

But what about the ones older than that? Only a few Magical Girls over the age of 30 become Magical Girls, and fewer still after 40 plus!

What if you have the right traits but have low Magical Potential? What's to do then?

Mascots always try to find candidates with high Magical Potential, but that's just not fair, is it? What about people with no potential who *want* to be a Magical Girl?

Well, luckily, we live in an age where technology always advances!

For the first time ever, *anyone* can be a Magical Girl if they want! That's right, no pesky requirements, no rules, if you want to be a hero, you *can* be a hero!

Simply volunteer, and we can transform you to real Magical Girls! No payment necessary! As this is the first time we're debuting this technology, we want participants from everywhere!

Have a little faith, and let the door to a world of dreams and magic be open to you!

Prologue

☆ **Shadow Gale**

The Hitokouji manor was under attack.

It happened suddenly, at 1 AM in the morning. No warning at all.

Long ago, the Hitokouji manor was built on top of a hill, overlooking a small town. It was a symbol of leadership and prosperity to the village.

Plenty of workers made the manor look magnificent.

Checkerboard white and black floors, a hedge maze, a large presence that overlooked the entire village.

The manor was decorated with mostly bird-themed statues, and lavished with a golden tint.

Construction workers came in day-in-day-out, finishing up in weeks.

After its construction, it was where the Hitokoujis lived for generations. Supported by their loyal family butlers, the Totoyamas.

Hitokoujis and Totoyamas were loyal to each other. Master and Servant, but also loyal friends. One would give their life for the other.

Mamori Totoyama was taught this, ever since she was a child.

She was given the name ‘Mamori’, meaning ‘To Protect’. She was going to be the protector of her generation of Hitokouji. She will be her shield, and if need be, she will be her sword.

Always watching out for her, like a shadow. A guardian angel. A protector. Most of all, a friend.

Kanoe Hitokouji.

Kanoe loved her family. She cherished them among all else. Her grandfather was someone she cared for a lot, always talking and spending time with him.

After he was gone, Kanoe became the new head of the Hitokouji household.

She had always looked out for the people in town. She worked hard to protect them. Some people praised her, some people hated her. Kanoe didn't much care, nor did she show her true feelings to them.

The only person Kanoe really trusts is her close family.

Ever since her grandfather died, the only family she has is Mamori.

They were introduced, as is custom, when they were children. Kanoe and Mamori played together, and bonded through the years.

Kanoe always showed her good side to others, but with Mamori, she was more free to become herself.

So Mamori could see both the good sides to her…

…and the bad sides, too.

Mamori was loyal to Kanoe. She'd still give her life for her in an instant. However, there were times when Kanoe would do questionable acts.

Mamori believed that Kanoe was a good person at heart, but she also knew she was manipulative, and can be uncaring of others, until her goal was achieved.

Mamori was there to ensure that Kanoe doesn't fall off into the deep end.

Mamori knew what Kanoe was capable of without any control.

When they were in elementary, Mamori had been bullied relentlessly by some children. She was called a 'lapdog', always obeying Kanoe without question. Kanoe took this personally.

Whatever she did to those kids that bullied her, they never showed up at school for a few weeks.

Then they became Magical Girls.

Mamori became the Magical Girl known as *Shadow Gale*. Her power, to upgrade and remodel objects.

Kanoe had become the Magical Girl known as *Pfle*. Her power is a wheelchair that can move incredibly fast.

The first thing they did after their first transformations was to make use of Shadow Gale's powers.

Pfle had Shadow Gale modify her wheelchair. She now had lasers for weaponry, as well as a variety of other gadgets on it.

Then, she had Shadow Gale install defenses in Hitokouji manor. Weapons, intruder detection systems, and maybe even enhance some entertainment systems in their manor, while they're at it.

Shadow Gale's powers have grown, and she's learned how to best use it.

She knows that she doesn't have to know how the original object works in order to modify it.

She also knows that she needs to know what she wants the object to become after using her magic. Touching something in the hopes that it'll remodel itself won't work.

Other than that, her magic has fairly limitless potential.

She just hoped Pfle wasn't using it for anything bad.

In their selection test, Pfle had played a huge gambit in order to protect both of them. Shadow Gale knew of this.

She knew what Pfle was capable of.

Pfle cares about Shadow Gale, but Shadow Gale is worried that Pfle will destroy herself in the process.

After they participated in another game where they barely made it out with their lives, Pfle had applied for the Land of Magic.

She had gotten a position at the Human Resources Division. Her resources and intelligence allowed her to soar through the ranks. High enough that she received a subordinate.

Shadow Gale knew little of what Pfle was doing in the Land of Magic, aside from the things she tells her.

It seems being in the Human Resources Division guarantees a large network of contacts to go with.

Pfle often told her of these contacts sometimes. Sometimes she kept them a secret. Never the full story, but always the truth.

The most recent thing Pfle had Shadow Gale do with her powers is modify a pair of mysterious goggles.

She made them able to transmit written information, as well as cause signal disruption, strong enough to affect Magical Phones within a large area of effect.

Shadow Gale was suspicious of this order, but Pfle assured her it's for a reason.

Shadow Gale cares about Pfle.

She doesn't want her to become something she will regret.

She knows there is a good person inside of her, but it's wrapped inside someone else. A manipulative, cold person.

Shadow Gale will remain by her side. Protect her. Save her.

She can't bear losing her either.

In a secure bunker underground, Shadow Gale and Pfle were hiding out. The manor was under attack, but they should be safe here.

The bunker was built by Shadow Gale's magic.

It has the strength to withstand a nuclear blast. It was built in case an army of Magical Girls ever decide to attack them.

It's been an hour since the attack…

They should be safe here…

The wall had monitors that watched over every room in the manor.

Men in what seems to be padded battle suits, covering their faces in helmets, guns at the ready, seem to be swarming the house.

Pfle was sitting at her chair, staring at the monitor.

Shadow Gale approached her,

“My lady, do you know these people?” asked Shadow Gale.

“No. No I do not.”

“So they’re not Magical Girls, right? We can take them if they’re just people, right?”

“They got past our defenses, Mamori. I wouldn’t underestimate them. Look at how they move.”

Shadow Gale looked at the monitors.

Upon closer inspection. The men were moving rather… strangely. It wasn’t smooth. It was a sort of jerking movement, their movements weren’t telegraphed by their heads. Their joints seemed to move on their own.

Body control? Puppetry? Mind control?

“I think a Magical Girl is behind this,” said Pfle.

“Then we should call for backup, right?”

“How so?”

“The Land of Magic. They’ll send help, won’t they? Aren’t you in the HR Division?”

Pfle smiled. She nodded, but she also sighed,

“Actually, I think this might be their idea,” said Pfle.

“What do you mean?”

“My position is pretty high up in Human Resources. If they truly think I’m in danger, they’ll send help before we know it. But it’s been an hour now, and we haven’t received any assistance at all.”

“What are you saying, my Lady?”

“I’m saying that maybe these people are from the Land of Magic.”

“Why!?”

Did Pfle do something to trigger this response? What was she up to now?

“My best guess is the Examination Division. Perhaps they sent someone to come after me.”

The Examination Division?

What did Pfle do!?

“Mamori, you need to protect yourself. They’re not after you, they’re after me.”

“I’m not just leaving you here.”

Pfle looked at Shadow Gale. She stroked her chin.

“Perhaps you’re right to call the Land of Magic, Mamori. I have just the person to call.”

“You… You do?”

“Call Lapis Lazuline.”

That name made Shadow Gale’s chest hurt. Her heart sank upon hearing it. Memories came flooding back.

Lapis Lazuline was part of the victims of their game.

Shadow Gale and Pfle still visit those graves, to pay respect to them, always remembering them in their hearts, using them to move forward with their lives.

In the process of trying to rebuild Lazuline’s family, Pfle had discovered that Lazuline was not the first.

She was the Second Lapis Lazuline.

After some more digging, Pfle found a Third.

The Third Lapis Lazuline possesses a powerful Magical Skill,

To take and store memories.

“Have Lazuline come through the gates. Your magic will let her pass without the Land of Magic knowing she was ever here.”

“Why send *her*?”

“Because whoever is behind these attacks will come for me. If they catch me, they’ll interrogate me. They will use *everything* to get information out of me. I can’t afford to break. If I don’t know what happened, they can’t force it out of me.”

Shadow Gale gulped in fear.

“Don’t worry, Mamori. It’s not you they’re after.”

“And the memories? What’s in there?”

“Lazuline can store the memories to someone else. They won’t understand the context, and when she’s ready, she can give them back to me.”

“But what’s in those memories, my Lady?”

Pfle didn’t answer.

She looked up at Shadow Gale and smiled, “Well, shall we make the call?”

Chapter 1
Beyond the Prism

☆ **Prism Cherry**

Sakura Kagami was an ordinary junior high school student.

She wasn't someone you'd call ugly, but certainly not someone you'd call pretty.

In her school singing competition, she wouldn't win the best, not even Top 5, but she also wouldn't sink low enough to be bad.

In sports, she'd receive a good job from her coach, but wouldn't receive praise. Yet, she wouldn't lose a game if she tried.

When her friends were asked about Sakura, they would say,

"Oh… she's here and there. Jack of all trades, I think. She's not really out there, but she's not really bad either."

She was just average. Your run-of-the-mill average girl next door…

…Or so people always thought of her that way.

Personally, Sakura hated that thought.

Sakura was the kind of girl who had a 'I can succeed if I do my best' attitude. As a kid, she tried out for sports and worked hard to get to the top, but there are people better than her.

In the swimming club, she tried to become the best, but of course, there are others who made the cut more than her.

She tried to make lots of friends as well, and while she made some close ones, she wasn't very popular.

Sakura liked to think of herself as the main character of her story. She wanted to become something special, so she tried hard to achieve that dream.

Unfortunately, life doesn't work that way. Sometimes you win some, sometimes you lose some.

But damn the world if they think they can keep her down easily.

She was labeled as just your average girl, but Sakura always tried something new every time. She'd join clubs, meet new people, and become active in them.

Most of her efforts probably failed because she tried to do too many things at once.

She entered Middle School afterwards.

Middle School was when she thought her life had changed.

One day, there was a poster stuck to the wall. It was invisible at first glance, or at least it was invisible to others.

Sakura didn't know that the words written on it were written with a magical pen, visible only to those with Magical Potential.

The words seemed faded to her, and she'd probably missed them if not for her taking a curious look.

She could only see the words if she looked close. Super close.

Magical Girl Selection Test

It contained instructions, and a map. It instructed Sakura, and potentially others, to arrive in a certain place at a certain time.

Sakura was curious, if a bit skeptical. She went for it anyways.

The directions were towards a building in the middle of town. It was empty, but Sakura entered it anyways.

Nobody was here but her.

She was worried that it might be some kind of scam, but then, her fears were gone.

She was transformed just there and then.

A cherry placed on her head.

Her hair becoming diamond blue.

A translucent dress that reflected the surroundings around her.

Diamonds and mirrors decorating her outfit.

She had transformed into a Magical Girl.

Her name,

Prism Cherry.

Sakura was excited. She was excited at the prospect of this new life. When she transformed, she didn't think too much of it.

She felt like she was chosen. She was ready. She's going to be a hero!

Months passed.

Sakura wasn't a hero.

Most of her time was spent helping people return lost bikes, or cleaning trash. Basic things, nothing extreme at all.

She had learned about the Land of Magic at that time.

Apparently, her selection test was unique.

It was unique because she was the only one that showed up. By sheer coincidence, no one else with Magical Potential saw the flyers scattered around town.

Probably because they were fliers, and people hated advertisements.

Since she was the only one that showed up at the appointed time, she automatically passed the test.

That's a little disappointing.

She even thought that her Magical Skill was a bit lame.

To be able to change things in mirrors.

At first she was confused. Then she checked her abilities. She placed some trash bags in front of the mirrors, and sure enough, she could change it to be invisible.

But the actual trash bags were still there.

What's the point of a power like that? It's not even useful in any way.

Reality doesn't change if Cherry changes their reflections. It didn't really help her in her work, nor was it useful for anything else.

Sometimes she'd use it for entertainment. She'd go to a local ballerina practice hall, with huge mirrors lined up. She'd sneak in and stage a show of herself, having fun, becoming the hero.

That's fun and all, but it still didn't change reality.

At some point, she asked the Land of Magic how she can improve herself. The Land of Magic then said that there was a meeting of Magical Girls who want to test their combat abilities.

Excited, Cherry immediately signed up and participated.

At the event, she saw so many different Magical Girls. All were trying to prove their strength.

The event was a fight to test your skills, both magic-based and physically. Winners of this tournament have the potential to be recruited to the Examination Division.

Some honorable winners would also be awarded with a possibility of mentorship with more combat-oriented Magical Girls.

Cherry tried to fight with them, but every match she got, she was beaten down and defeated. Her body hurt from the actual strain of fighting these other Magical Girls.

They were too fast, too powerful, too strong.

These were truly the best of the best. Cherry's powers couldn't even help her in this situation, so it's like she was entering with no powers at all.

There were a sea of masters and fighters, and Cherry was lost among them.

Prism Cherry went back to her ordinary daily life.

Sometimes she'd talk to a Land of Magic official to get her mind off of things. Just to hear the news too.

"Lose the fights?"

"More like I lost the prelims."

"Oh. Shame."

"They were pretty good."

"Yeah, Land of Magic's been increasing their security lately. Tightening up their tests. If you can't defend yourself, or you don't pass standards, you just don't pass. Surprised you got through when you did."

"I uh… was the only one in my selection test."

"Really? Huh… Explains it. No offense, of course."

"None taken. So… what are the other Magical Girls, the successful ones like?"

"Well, they're here and there. Some are out fighting terrorists. Some use their powers to help their daily life. There's a rumor of a singer using some charming voice power to boost sales, for example. Borderline illegal if you ask me, but it doesn't hurt anyone, so resources aren't being wasted on that. Then there are the others who become recluses. Live with their Mascot partners somewhere, out in the woods, free of any care in the world."

"Wow… sounds pretty wild."

"It can be. I'm glad it is, y'know? I miss this."

“What?”

“Just being peaceful and all that.”

“It’s nice. I kinda wanna see some action, though.”

“Mm, understandable. Hey kid, you said ‘successful’ earlier. Don’t sell yourself short, okay?”

Cherry nodded, and left, back to her daily life again.

Both as Sakura Kagami and as Prism Cherry, Sakura felt like she had tried her best and still couldn’t achieve much.

It’s here in her second year of Middle School that she had to accept a fact of life.

The universe didn’t revolve around her.

The universe didn’t start when she was born.

The universe will move on when she dies.

She wasn’t a main character. She never was. The truth of life is simple,

There is no main character.

Everyone is the protagonist of their own story.

Everyone wants to make it work.

If they can’t keep up with others, then it’s their own fault.

She wasn’t special. She wasn’t chosen. And she’s not thinking this trying to pity herself, either.

Nobody was special. If they wanted to *be* special, they had to make the world notice them.

The thought scared her.

She used to be naïve, but she had gotten used to this. It didn’t break her spirit.

She wanted to make a name for herself. She wanted to be known for something.

Sakura will become a hero.

All the people she had seen and idolized, she had only seen their results, not the effort they put into them.

And so Sakura won't give up.

She may be an ordinary girl, and she may just be an ordinary Magical Girl, but she'll keep trying until she finds that chance. Until she finds that moment where she'll be a hero.

Sakura Kagami isn't a main character, but she damn well will make the world know that she's worth it.

The next day, Sakura was getting ready to go home from Middle School. She greeted some of her classmates.

One of them, a fairly pretty girl, who didn't really talk to her much before, approached her.

Nami Aoki.

She recognized her by name, because she was a fairly popular girl in school. Lots of friends, high social status, bright, energetic.

Why was she talking to her again?

"Hey, Sakura. I got something to ask you. You mind?"

"Uh… sure, what's up?"

Nami pulled her into the school hallways, not near anyone they knew.

"So… Sakura… you're a Magical Girl, aren't you? I saw you transform on the roof the other day!"

The question took Sakura by surprise,

“Wha… Huh? What… Magical Girl? What do you mean?”

“Relax, Sakura! I’m a Magical Girl, too!”

“Wait… What!?”

That day, Nami showed Sakura her transformation at the end of school.

Nami looked amazingly beautiful, far outclassing Sakura in terms of looks alone. Her stylish outfit made Sakura gasp in awe.

Nami Aoki is a Magical Girl.

Her name,

Princess Deluge.

☆ **Fal**

“Snow White. Wake up, time for dinner, Pon!”

The Cyber Fairy, Fal, had appeared from the Magical Phone laid down on the floor.

He looked around the room,

“Your mother’s going to be very worried if you come down late, Pon!”

The futon was empty. Snow White’s stuff was scattered throughout the floor. The entire room was empty.

She wasn’t home…

…Out working, again.

Fal sighed, and returned back to his digital form. Reports still had to be sent, after all.

Still, he worries for Snow White.

After Snow White had rescued him from his former master, Fal had been happy to serve any new master that wanted him.

He became partners with Snow White. During his time, he saw the extent of what Snow White was capable of doing.

Being assigned as Snow White's mascot meant that Fal was able to monitor messages coming towards Snow White.

There was one that kept being ignored, or at least averted by Snow White.

Messages from someone named Ripple.

According to Snow White, she didn't want to endanger her by making contact with her at all. At first, Fal respected this decision.

Then he saw what Snow White could do on her own.

Snow White was known as the Magical Girl Hunter, and she didn't earn that name for no reason.

She had been one of the two survivors of Clamberry's tests. In the time since then, Snow White has captured and arrested over 30 rogue Magical Girls.

Some people are in awe of the achievements, while others laughed, as it seems to be a small number for such a 'feared' figure.

Some of those missions included taking down the Lake of Fire, Flame Flamey.

Flame Flamey was not an easy Magical Girl to take down. She was a graduate of Mao Pam's '*Mao School*'.

Mao Pam was a legendary figure, who trained Clamberry herself. She also hosted various battle royales.

The Hell Survival Games, where the best of the best fighters gathered.

Some of the participants of the 36th Tournament were legends such as Cutie Altair, and Magical Girls such as Flame Flamey herself, The Blue Dragon Panasu, and the second Lapis Lazuline.

All of these Magical Girls were skilled in combat, and Snow White had to find a way to defeat Flame Flamey.

She spent days tracking her down, finding out her weaknesses, planning in advance.

When she faced Flame Flamey, she faced her with all her cards at hand, a method to defeat her, and no fear.

That's why they called her the Magical Girl Hunter, because she wasn't a battle-hungry fighter,

She was a patient and efficient hunter.

She stalks her prey, she sets traps for them, she finds out their weaknesses, and then she exploits them.

To the outside world, this is what Snow White was.

She was offered an honorary position on the Land of Magic, as well as becoming an external staff member of the Examination Division.

Officially, Snow White wasn't in the Examination Division, as she hasn't been properly trained, or sanctioned.

However, she was so good at her job, and she was so efficient, that the Land of Magic would give her 'anonymous tips' and free passes.

Essentially, she was unofficially one of them.

The very mention of the Magical Girl Hunter coming to town was enough to get some rogue Magical Girls to surrender.

Snow White would be more than happy to take them in.

Some, however, resisted.

That's when she would have to get… forceful.

Fal remembered the last time it happened. Snow White had fought hard against one Magical Girl.

She was a strong one, able to endure many of Snow's attacks, and she gave Snow a lot of trouble.

Fal could only watch, as he was just a Cyber Fairy.

Eventually, bloodied and bruised, Snow got the upper hand. She managed to turn the fight in her favor, but she didn't stop.

She pushed herself to the limit, angry and enraged, and pummeled the poor girl, even after she was unconscious.

Fal had to step in.

Fal had to remind her of who she was.

Fal had to prevent her from becoming what Clamberry was.

There were days like this, where Snow would be a bit unhinged. That's why Fal stayed by her side. He was, and always will be, her partner.

He owes her that much.

Outside, Snow White may be a legend, a hero, or even someone to be feared.

But Fal knew that inside that, was a broken girl.

Sometimes, Snow White didn't take Fal with her. Usually on the more dangerous missions. She was afraid that if something happened to her, that something will happen to him as well.

On those nights, Snow White would come home, bloodied, battered, tired. She'd wobble from the window. She'd try to take some Healing Medicine. She collapsed on the futon. She'd pass out for hours at a day.

Fal would always ask her if she's okay, but Snow insisted that she's fine.

She overworks herself, sometimes.

That's when Fal decided to break his promise.

He contacted Ripple.

He told her that he was Snow White's mascot, a partner. He consulted with her, told her Snow White's actions.

Ripple was a good friend, and was also worried for Snow White.

She resolved to join the Land of Magic, properly, in order to help her from the inside.

And then she went missing.

Ripple went missing.

Snow White was the first to be informed of this. When she found out from a tip that Ripple had been assigned to an Investigation team in B-City, she tried to reach her.

Unfortunately, there seemed to be a blackout in B-City. Not only that, there was a barrier surrounding it as well.

Snow White couldn't enter.

She could only hope that her friend had made it out.

After the barrier was lifted, she immediately went inside the city. She looked everywhere for signs of a body.

She had to be careful, as Land of Magic officials had come for what remained of the survivors. Snow White, however, was trying to find her friend, Ripple.

Throughout her search in B-City, she found wrecked buildings, ruined streets, a crashed train, so many bodies.

She looked through all of them, investigating one by one.

Then she found what seemed to be a giant hole in the ground. The surrounding battlefield was ruined, but Snow White still looked for any kind of body.

She didn't find Ripple's, so why isn't she here?

For weeks, Snow White used all of her contacts to try and find Ripple. She had abandoned her usual hunts in order to find her friend.

She followed trails, clues.

Ripple was sent to B-City under 7753. She wasn't quite sure who that was. The only thing she knows was that she may have worked in the Human Resources Division.

She used her Land of Magic contacts to try and find people close to Ripple at that point.

She found out the leader of the Investigation team had been hospitalized. Unfortunately, she wasn't allowed to speak with her.

Dead end.

She tried another way, she looked through the files of the B-City Incident. The leader of the Investigation Team was part of the Examination Division, so they should have some files.

Then she confirmed it. What she saw broke her heart.

Ripple had died.

She never reported back to the Investigation team. She was last seen heading to fight another Magical Girl, and… nothing.

Fal saw Snow White sank further into despair.

For the next few days, Snow White stayed in her human form. She chatted with friends, she laughed alongside them, and she hung out with them as Koyuki Himekawa.

Fal encouraged this, he wanted Snow White to be happy.

This was Snow White's way of coping.

She has nobody now. So she tries to make do with the friends she still has outside of her Magical Girl life.

But she has nobody who knows, or shares her experiences. Ripple was the only one who was truly left.

They both survived Clamberry's tests and lost close friends.

No one else understood that feeling.

Fal felt guilty, as he feels like this was his fault. Telling Ripple about Snow White, causing her to try and join the Land of Magic, leading up to all this.

At the same time, he wanted Snow White to simply be happy with her life, to retire, and to live peacefully.

For a while, this was true. She *was* happy.

For a time, at least.

She spent 3 months or so untransformed. Spending her time with her friends. Trying to go back to normal.

She began to slowly move on from Ripple's death, and accepted it.

There was regret in her eyes, that they haven't met again in such a long time.

Then Snow White received the message.

It was a message from the Examination Division.

'*Pythie Frederica is confirmed to still be at large.*'

That was all it took.

Snow White became the Magical Girl Hunter once again. Sacrificing her body and her mind to fight any evils of Magical Girls.

Pythie Frederica must've brought horrible memories to Snow White, but to immediately relinquish her recuperation.

To go back to this dangerous job.

"Why are you doing this to yourself, Pon?"

"Because I have to be the one to deal with the bad guys."

"You don't have to, Pon."

“Good people are the easiest to destroy, bad people are the easiest to create. I have to change that.”

She’s doing it because no one else will.

No, that’s wrong.

She’s doing it so there won’t have to be anyone else doing it.

That night, she didn’t take Fal on her hunt.

She came back home worse than before. She could barely stand.

The rogues she hunted that time were already prepared for her. She was out of shape, but she edged it out.

She was already forcing herself back to the world she left. After bandaging herself up, she fell on the futon, unable to move.

Fal could only watch in sorrow.

He knows what she’s doing.

She’s trying to use her own body as bait.

She *wants* rogue Magical Girls to go after her.

It makes her job easier. She wants to throw herself to the wolves, because she’s hunting the wolves themselves.

The rumors about her efficiency, her ruthlessness, the fear she’s creating to the rogue Magical Girls.

All of them had *some* basis of truth, but were greatly overexaggerated. Snow White wanted the Magical Girl Hunter title to mean something to her enemies.

She knows that reputation can get you a long way.

Either way, she’s going to kill herself at this rate.

Snow White’s breathing was heavy, her movement was slow, scratches and blood, her muscles must’ve been sore.

A Magical Girl's body can heal, but it will take some time. She didn't even warm up. She just went back.

How am I supposed to help you if you're not willing to help yourself?

As Snow White's mascot, Fal had access to Snow White's messages.

As Snow White's reputation grew, so did the variety of prank texts and false alarms.

Luckily, thanks to his old master, Keek, Fal was different than other Cyber Fairies. Unlike most normal Cyber Fairies, Keek heavily engineered him.

Keek modified him, and she used her own paranoia to outfit him with the best anti-spying measure.

Fal was able to detect the sender of a text, regardless of how hard they try to keep this a secret.

No other Cyber Fairy can do this, unless they happen to be linked to all Magical Phones at once. Fal didn't need to.

He used this to sort out the spam and the real threats. Snow White relied on him for this. While Snow White was away, he sorted through her daily messages for the day.

Then he found something.

A text sent from Ripple.

What is this?

Fal doesn't make mistakes. His programming was absolute. This is most definitely from Ripple. At the very least, it's from her Magical Phone.

Was Ripple alive?

If she was alive, why doesn't she show her face?

Did someone use Ripple's phone? If so, who?

Fal was nervous, but he opened the text regardless. There was no introduction or subject in the text, and it was completely straightforward.

In S-City, you'll find a research facility.

The facility supposedly is researching the creation of Man-Made Magical Girls.

As the Magical Girl Hunter, would you kindly investigate this?

This is a one-time offer. You have a limited time to head to S-City, whereupon you will agree to the conditions of this message.

Tell no one.

If you break any of these rules, specialized magic will erase you and your mascot's memories of this message and its contents

That's strange.

This certainly wasn't Ripple's way of writing, but it was sent from her phone. That being said, the contents of this message were also strange.

What kind of magic could erase your memories from a phone? Fal had never heard of such a thing. He didn't even think that was possible.

He thought for a while.

Bobbing back and forth, sprinkling colorful ribbon-like things everywhere.

He decided,

He was going to tell Snow White about the message.

☆ **Prism Cherry**

That night, Prism Cherry was just innocently wandering off. She didn't mean to get spotted. She was lucky that it was another Magical Girl.

Prism Cherry was assigned to guard her district, the Marudan District.

After about 4 days of nothing, she decided to take small breaks. It got kind of boring not being able to do anything for a long time.

Patrols were mostly silent. No crimes, not much happening. People were very peaceful around there.

One time on her patrol, she saw a fireworks festival. Far off in the Palace District.

She decided to skip off to that district and watch the show from the rooftop.

Unfortunately, Magical Girls have night vision, so the fireworks didn't have the same charm.

Because of this, Cherry transformed back into Sakura.

As a human, she could witness the beautiful fireworks display as it lit up the night sky. She spent about half an hour staring at it.

After it was over, she transformed into Prism Cherry and went back on her merry way.

How could she have known that a passerby would see her?

Nami Aoki.

"I saw you transform on the roof the other day!"

Those words made Cherry shudder. She knew what would happen if her cover was blown as a Magical Girl.

The Land of Magic would take away her powers and her memories, and she'd just be Sakura Kagami once again.

She may be an ordinary Magical Girl, but that doesn't mean she wants to give it away! She hasn't even had a chance to prove herself yet.

"I'm a Magical Girl, too!"

At the sound of those words, Cherry was relieved.

The two of them talked after school, and they agreed to meet up on the same rooftop that Sakura transformed in.

A little embarrassing, but worth it.

She was lucky that the one who saw her was another Magical Girl.

The next day at school, several of her classmates spoke to her.

“You talked to Nami!?”

“What’s she like?”

“Wait, did she actually approach you?”

“Sakura, what’d you talk about?”

Nami was a popular girl at school. People wanted to befriend her. Nami approaching Sakura out of the blue must’ve shocked her entire class.

It was unusual for the two to even talk, since they had almost nothing in common, nor did they ever meet.

In the beginning of the school year, the teachers would assign groups in the class, for assignments and whatnot.

Sakura was assigned to a different group from Nami.

The groups were permanent, so they practically have zero reason to talk to each other.

…Until now.

“Ah, yeah… It’s just, y’know, she wanted to ask me if I knew anything about theater! I had singing experience, so…”

“Really? What’d you say?”

“Things… stuff, singing… acting… okaygottagobye!”

Sakura didn’t want to hang around for too long.

She went to the meeting place.

She's gotta admit, she's a bit anxious. To think there would be another Magical Girl so close-by. What are the odds?

Wait…

What *are* the odds?

She was the only Magical Girl in her selection test, there shouldn't *be* another Magical Girl in the city. Unless there was another selection test?

The Land of Magic never informed her.

Certainly, her regional officer didn't inform her, either. She texted them just in case.

'*Excuse me. Just wondering. Is there a Magical Girl in charge of the Palace District?*'

The reply came afterwards,

'*No, there isn't.*'

She responded,

'*Are there any Magical Girls other than me in S-City? In charge of any districts?*'

The reply came again,

'*No. Unfortunately, you're the only one in the last selection test. We havn't held another for a while*'.

That response made her nervous.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, Sakura!"

A voice from behind her brought her back to her senses.

She saw the girl standing in front of her.

Her hair was a light blue hue, as light as the sea. On her rght leg, were stockings, or was that armor? It was in the form of fish scales.

Her waist had wing-like decorations. Wait, they weren't wings, they were ocean waves. White ocean waves, as her skirt.

Her chest had a small diamond with a chain linked to it.

She was holding a long and large trident. A fancy design, with a blue pearl separating the 3 prongs.

On her head was a tiara, with a glowing blue jewel in the center of it.

"…Nami?"

"What's up? You can't tell it's me? C'mon, now, haha! Oh, right! I haven't properly introduced myself!"

She raised and bent her right leg, she placed her left arm on her chest, and held her trident at a downward angle.

"The Blue Torrent! *Princess Deluge*!"

Oh my.

She has a fancy pose.

She held that pose for about 10 seconds, before twirling her trident and setting it on the roof. Casually holding it as well.

"Aaaand… *you* are?" asked Deluge.

"Wah?? Uh… I'm uh… *Prism… Cherry!* Er…"

Cherry had been half-deciding on doing a spontaneous pose, but decided not to, and just awkwardly fidgeted around.

"Prism Cherry? That's such a cute name! You even got a little cherry on your head! That's so cool!"

"Oh… thanks! Hehe… Princess Deluge is pretty cool too. The tiara fits it."

“You think so? Nice, nice! So, which facility were you from?”

“Huh?”

Cherry was taken aback.

Facility?

Deluge asked a strange question to her. She had no idea if she meant something else entirely, or if maybe she just misheard her.

“I only know of one lab in the city, so… were you from out of town?” asked Deluge.
Lab? Facility? Did Deluge think Magical Girls were built in a lab or something?

Then Cherry remembered,

No other Magical Girls.

Can’t be a coincidence. Cherry decided that she wanted to find out more, but she wasn’t sure what to say, or rather, what to even report to the Land of Magic.

“I’m… not from a lab, actually,” said Cherry.

“Huh!? How’d you become a Magical Girl, then?” asked Deluge.

“I was kinda… transformed?”

“Really!? Wow, you must be super special! I had to go to one of the facilities! Just getting transformed like that! That’s awesome!”

Cherry admitted, she liked the praise. It made her feel like she’s something special.

Still, she knows that it’s just Deluge not knowing what she’s talking about. Cherry was still willing to investigate what this is all about.

But how would she even start?

“So, I wanted you to meet some of my friends, actually. If you don’t mind, of course!” said Deluge.

Friends?

Other Magical Girls?

Others like her?

“Wait… there’s others?”

“Yeah! Are you the only one, Cherry?”

“Um… well, yeah. Kinda sorta…”

“The only one *and* you were transformed? Wow, you’re like… The Chosen One or… something, hehe!”

Cherry blushed a bit when Deluge said that.

If only this girl knew.

“My friends would *love* to meet you, they’re good girls, I promise!”

“I’d love to meet them too!”

“Awesome! I’m sure we’ll get along just fine.”

“Lead the way!”

Cherry was actually excited to meet other Magical Girls.

At the same time, she was interested in Deluge’s actual backstory. How did she become a Magical Girl? What lab? What’s going on?

Maybe, this was a twist of fate.

Maybe if Cherry can get to the bottom of this, she can become the hero she’s always wanted to be.

She hoped that would be the case.

The two travelled to the outskirts of the city. When Deluge stopped at an abandoned building, Cherry’s smile dropped.

Expectation, meet reality.

Cherry was hoping that it was some kind of super cool high tech laboratory, but an abandoned building logically seemed to make more sense as a research facility. At least if you're hiding.

Deluge entered the building, and she opened the door leading to the basement.

There was a keypad on the side of the door, but Deluge didn't even press it.

"What's that for?" asked Cherry.

"Oh. Well, we're supposed to set up a password just in case, but I'd rather not. Too much of a hassle. Besides, not many people just wander off in here, anyways. C'mon, I'll show you downstairs!"

☆ **Fal**

"No Magical Girls detected within 100 meters, Pon!"

"Extend it."

"I can only extend up to 200 meters, Pon! You're going to have to either move around, or get a better Magical Phone, Pon!"

"Then let's do 200 meters. I'll walk around. Tell me if you detect anyone."

"Alright, Pon!"

Fal and Snow White were walking in the shopping district. Fal had been ordered to detect for any Magical Girls in the area.

Snow White started her investigation immediately after seeing the text message.

The first thing she had to do was find other Magical Girls. She wasn't sure if they were going to be friendly or not, but making contact was important.

Fal was her partner.

He was her mascot.

A lot of people have various misconceptions about mascots. They call their Magical Girls ‘Master’, and most of the time, they are there to assist them. Mascots are even a symbol of status to a Magical Girl. Similar to butlers in a way. If you have your own mascot, you’re a big deal.

But they aren’t slaves.

On the contrary, a mascot’s job is to help the Magical Girl they’re assigned to. That sometimes includes pointing them in the right direction if they stray away from it.

That means supporting them. As a partner, as a friend, giving them advice. Mascots are supposed to be this way.

Recent events have tainted the mascots in the eyes of the Land of Magic. Cyber Fairies, especially.

Most of this can be blamed on the events that happened years ago. The fallout from Clamberry’s tests were still being felt. Mascots weren’t trusted anymore.

A stigma was attached to them, especially cyber fairies, who looked the same, sounded the same, and *almost* acted the same as Fav.

They all had the same tic. They had the same bobbing movement. They had the same smile.

Fal wasn’t to blame, but he understood why it’s like this.

Fal himself couldn’t really experience the fallout firsthand, due to his previous master being Keek.

Fal wasn’t even supposed to be alive.

Keek was searching for discarded mascots. She was looking for dismantled and broken ones. That’s when she found Fal.

FA-00 Series Cyber Fairy.

Keek heavily modified Fal. She made sure that Fal was hers and hers alone. The modifications broke Fal’s mind, but kept his body, or… what you can call a body, strong.

It distorted him, it forcefully changed him.

It made him more powerful than most other Cyber Fairies, and gave him several upgrades over them, thanks to Keek's unique abilities, and knowledge.

However, Keek cared little for Fal's opinions.

Fal hated Keek.

Keek tortured him to no end, all to create the strongest Cyber Fairy. And so, Fal was created. He was, statistically, better than most Cyber Fairies.

But he was broken inside, mental torture and distortion. Most Magical Girls, or people in general, wouldn't care much for Cyber Fairies, because they're AI, unlike other kinds of mascots.

But they also have emotions too. These are not your run-of-the-mill AI like you'd find in the human world. These were powered by magic.

If Cyber Fairies weren't capable of emotion, they wouldn't be capable of evil.

Fav was evil.

Fav did the tests for evil purposes.

That was proof. The one mistake people made.

Fal wasn't evil. Fal tried not to be. But stigma is stigma.

Strong body, broken mind.

In a way, Fal and Snow White were perfect partners.

Fal hated Keek, but he loved Snow White. He cared for her. He wants her to be happy.

Most of all, he respected her, and she respected him. Fal doesn't call Snow White 'Master'. They were close enough together that they go on a first-name basis.

They trust each other.

One might think that it's strange for a Magical Girl to trust her mascot. What is her mascot protecting? A Magical Girl can protect their mascot, but can a mascot protect their Magical Girl?

Fal trusted Snow White to protect him, and Snow White trusted Fal to protect her.

Fal's job was to ensure Snow White remained Snow White.

To ensure that she doesn't fall off the deep end.

To ensure that inside her broken self, there's something still holding her together.

That's what he's protecting.

Fal has been comparing Snow White to Keek, but what does Snow White feel about Fal?

Snow White never really talks about these things. She's not that kind of person, at least not anymore.

Does she care about Fal? Is she just using Fal?

Cyber Fairies have been looked down upon lately. Ever since Fav was revealed to be the mastermind behind Clamberry's tests.

A Cyber Fairy? No thanks, they're probably evil.

Gah, I'd rather have some other kind of fairy.

Why do you have a Cyber Fairy?

Their design probably didn't help them either.

People's first reaction when seeing a Cyber Fairy after Fav was probably hatred. Like it or not, Fav had shaped the opinions of the entire Cyber Fairy species.

Post-Clamberry, Cyber Fairies rarely get used. The only time they would is due to their usefulness.

Of course, former winners of Clamberry's tests usually would be reminded, or feel nauseous, after one look at a Cyber Fairy. At least that's one good thing.

Snow White hunting down the Children of Clamberry, and using Fal to intimidate them. At least he's useful then.

Fal didn't think Snow White subscribed to the Cyber Fairy hate. She's kept him all these years, after all.

Fal is a special Cyber Fairy, thanks to Keek.

He somewhat shared the powers that Keek shares. In a short distance, Fal could transport Snow White and someone else to a miniature pocket cyber world.

This way, ambushes in real life won't affect the people around her.

The power was modified by Keek herself, as she would take Fal around with her wherever she went.

The power was only useful for emergencies, and is definitely not as strong as Keek's actual abilities.

"No one?" asked Snow.

"There's too many people. Scanning everything is getting a bit slower, Pon. I'll have to reduce the radius of my search if I want to find them faster, Pon."

"No. Keep the radius. Reduce the accuracy. Scan clusters of people at a time."

"You're sure, Pon?"

"Yes."

Snow White kept walking, and Fal kept scanning for Magical Girls.

S-City didn't have many Magical Girls to begin with, and it was the 2nd largest city in the local prefecture, the 1st being N-City.

Unlike N-City, which acts like a bustling capital, S-City had more people, but was smaller. As a result, the population density was higher.

"Koyuki?"

A voice of a girl rang out. Who was that?

“Huh?” Snow White turned around as she heard her name being called.

“Oh my gosh, it *is* you! It’s been so long! I didn’t think we’d meet up, here!”

“Akari-Chan?”

“Heyy! Long time no see, Koyuki!”

A girl, slightly taller than the petite Snow White, approached her. Snow White was in her human form, so she wouldn’t know that she’s a Magical Girl.

This girl, Akari, had long dark hair, with brown highlights at the bottom. Her shirt was filled with decorations, and her bag was filled with pins.

She seemed like the party-type.

Snow White was friends with someone like this?

Fal peeked out from Snow White’s bag, without showing himself. He was curious to know what Snow White’s relationships were like.

He was a little jealous, since Snow White could make friends, but at the same time, he felt really proud of her somewhat.

The only friends that Fal knew personally were Ripple, and she’s gone, now…

Snow White and Akari laughed happily, sharing memories. Fal couldn’t tell if Snow’s laugh was genuine, but he was happy for her.

It seems like these two were elementary school friends.

Fal checked Akari’s status.

It returned negative.

Akari wasn’t a Magical Girl.

Fal calmed down, and continued his scan as he searched around.

“Well, it’s nice bumping into you, here! I’ll see you round, kay?”

“Glad we got to meet again after all these years,” said Snow.

“Take care of Yatsu-Chan and Sumi-Chan! Say hi for me!” said Akari as she waved goodbye while jogging away.

A few seconds passed.

“Was she a Magical Girl?”

“No, Pon. It returned negative, Pon.”

“Alright, let’s keep looking, then.”

“It’s getting late, Pon. You sure you wanna keep doing this, Pon?”

“I’ve decided I’m not going back to N-City tonight.”

“Huh?”

“I’m staying in S-City until we get something. A lead. A clue. *Something*.”

“Well, I don’t need to sleep, but I’m worried about you, Pon.”

“I’ll find a place to stay. Just focus on the mission, right now.”

“Alright, Pon.”

Fal was worried.

Fal remembered when Snow White was this focused on finding something.

The night that the barrier of B-City went down. Snow White was waiting outside.

As soon as the barrier went down, Snow White sneaked into B-City, being careful of any Land of Magic officials that were sent to clean it up.

She wanted to get there before they did. She needed to find Ripple.

“We’re not leaving until we find some lead, okay?”

“Okay, Pon.”

“Any survivors?”

“In the outskirts somewhere, Pon!”

Snow White rushed to the place where Fal had detected traces of magical energy. She found the site of a huge battle.

There seems to be blood around most of the site. An enormous amount was centered in the middle, and in a pile of logs.

Two bodies, one lying on what seemed to be a rock, who dragged herself there.

Another whose throat was slit.

Two girls, unconscious. She can’t question them this way.

But there was one that was alive and awake. Floating around, expressionless.

“Do you know about Ripple?”

The girl shook her head.

“A ninja-style Magical Girl. One arm, one eye.”

“Mei was only in a train before this.”

That was a lead.

Snow White looked for a train station. Followed the tracks to a crash site. Aside from the two mangled bodies of what used to be Magical Girls, there was no sign of Ripple.

Snow White’s fist began to shake. Not only was there so much death, it all seemed unnecessary too.

Her anger built up that she punched a dent in one of the train cars that crashed.

Eventually, after scanning the city, she came across every possible battlefield. A giant hole, a ruined apartment, the parking lot of the school.

Nothing. No signs of her.

It took Fal hours to convince Snow White that she didn't have to look for Ripple in the city.

Now, in S-City, with a similar issue. Man-Made Magical Girls?

Fal hoped that this wasn't a lost cause.

☆ **Princess Inferno**

Underneath the bunker, the monitors of their secret base lit up, and an alarm blared as well.

"ALERT: Disruptors sighted outside of town! 3 Soldier Classes, 1 Knight Class"

Inferno's eyes lit up. The other Princesses quickly jumped into action as well.

Prism Cherry jumped at the alarm. This was her first time, but she also tried to catch up with the other girls.

"We got Disruptors, whoo!" said Princess Tempest.

"Alright, don't rush out!" yelled Princess Quake

"I call elevator," said Princess Inferno.

"C'mon, Cherry! This'll be fun!" said Princess Deluge.

Still uncoordinated, of course, but they're getting there.

Princess Deluge, Princess Inferno, Princess Quake, and Prism Cherry took the express elevator. Princess Tempest didn't bother. She immediately flew up towards the long stairwell.

As Inferno exited the elevator at the top floor, she saw Tempest waving at them.

"C'mon! C'mon! I'll race ya there!" she said with a smile, as she zoomed through the skies outside.

Tempest was the only one of them who could fly. In a way, it made Inferno a bit jealous. However, at least they've got their speed.

Throughout the city, they jumped across light poles, slid across alleyways, and climbed up buildings, at a speed so fast that humans would miss them if they blinked.

Cherry, however…

…Prism Cherry was struggling to keep up, but she could still run pretty fast.

"Gah… Hah… Hah… Hang on, a bit!"

Deluge was slowing down a bit, if only to support Cherry.

Inferno was happy. She had never felt so free in her life. To run as fast as this, at this speed, with the wind blowing in her face.

I can run again!

So this is what being a Magical Girl was like. She had never imagined a better life than this. The strength, power, and freedom.

Akari Hiyama was a Magical Girl.

Her name,

Princess Inferno.

Using the tiara on her head, she followed the directions towards the edge of the city, where the Disruptors should be found.

As they reached the edge of town, they saw them.

Large black creatures.

Three of them are beastly, on fours, with tusks. One of them had a large humanoid body, but a goat for legs. Like some strange centaur.

3 Soldier Classes, 1 Knight Class.

According to the Professor, long ago, before humans discovered civilization. Ancient beings made a deal with them in order to give them knowledge.

In return, they would seed creatures that will awaken thousands of years from then.

Humans, being foolish, and not thinking long-term, accepted the offer.

Now, invaders from another world, Disruptors, have popped up. Most of them were concentrated in S-City.

The only ones who could stop them are Magical Girls.

They were created within the four Greek elements. The knowledge of these elements were passed down from generation to generation, supposedly as a way to remind humanity that their protectors would come from these elements.

The Disruptors often appeared from underground, which is why the research facilities, to bring back the elements as warriors, were underground, as well as their base.

Thus, the Princesses were created, and Akari was part of this legend, as Princess Inferno.

A secret history.

Superpowered villains.

A team of heroes.

Akari felt like she was really living in a Magical Girl Anime, and she was happy about this.

Now that they've reached their destination, they saw Tempest waving further ahead, near the Disruptors.

"You guys are SLOWPOOOKES," she yelled out.

"Alright, everyone, like we practiced! Together!" said Quake.

"Hah… Okay, okay, I'm ready!" gasped Cherry.

"Alright, Princesses, form up!" said Deluge as she got into position.

Quake in the middle, Deluge to her right, Inferno to her left, and Tempest soaring behind them. They began their signature pose.

“The Blue Torrent! *Princess Deluge*!”

“The Red Blaze! *Princess Inferno*!”

“The White Typhoon! *Princess Tempest*!”

“The Black Earth! *Princess Quake*!”

Princess Quake’s jewel shined yellow, so really it should be the yellow… something. However, most of her outfit was black, so they decided with Black Earth.

Finally, Prism Cherry came in with her pose (still practicing).

“The Shining Radiance! *Prism Cherry*!”

Since Prism Cherry didn’t have a gem, they couldn’t think of a way to do a shout that involved ‘*The [Color] [Noun]’*. Instead, she was given a special pass.

She’s basically a sixth ranger anyways, so like any good sixth ranger in these kinds of shows, she’d be the different one.

Though, it’s uncommon for sixth rangers to join a team this early in a story. Oh well, can’t be helped.

All of them brandished their weapons.

Princess Quake pointed at the Disruptors and shouted out, “Shine brightly and strike fear, *Pure Elements*!”

The Disruptors roared back at them.

Inferno worked quick. She jumped in front of the group, and as her gem grew bright red, she pushed out her palms, and a large blaze of fire shot out of it.

The Disruptors screamed out in pain, a bellowing beastlike roar.

“Too hot for ya? I’ll take care of that,” said Tempest as she released her twinbladed boomerang.

The boomerang was thrown, and created a vortex of air. It seemed to cut through anything that it touches, as it sliced off two of the Soldier Disruptors heads clean off.

“You missed one, Tempest!” said Deluge as she unleashed a torrent of water to one of the Soldier Disruptors. The blast stunned the Disruptor, as Deluge immediately stabbed it in the head with her Trident.

The Knight Disruptor bellowed out, and charged at Deluge.

However, Quake was quick on her feet. She went in front of the charging Knight, and she swung her hammer at its torso, launching the large beast far away.

Quake ran after it, pinning it down as she brought her hammer down to its face.

A quick fight. Only lasted a few seconds at most.

Deluge and Tempest high fived each other.

Quake nodded happily, and Inferno?

Inferno was just happy. This feels great.

Cherry didn’t do much in the battle, but she was still in awe at the speed of the Princesses. She seems new, and wasn’t made in a facility, apparently.

Inferno was a bit curious as to who she was.

Quake came over and put her hands on her hips.

“Well, since we’ve got the day to ourselves, let’s head back and do some combat practice!” said Quake.

“HUUUH!? Why!? I was thinking… y’know, we could have the day off?” said Tempest with a childlike grin.

“Tempest, you *always* think a day off is good, no?” asked Deluge.

“Well, this time Inferno would agree!” said Tempest.

“Huh? I actually *like* combat training,” retorted Inferno.

“But your mom always says that you seem too pre-occupied with stuff to study! Aren’t you kinda *forced* to skip combat training, today?” said Tempest.

“H-Hey! Don’t bring family stuff into this!” said Inferno, embarrassed.

Tempest stuck her tongue out with a smile, teasing Inferno.

The Princesses laughed, and Inferno saw Cherry laughing as well. Her face was red, not because she was mostly fire-based, but because she was embarrassed.

☆ **Prism Cherry**

Prism Cherry couldn’t believe it.

She was in a wonderful adventure with her friends. She wanted to improve herself, sure, because the sheer strength of these Princesses was incredible.

She laughed with them, for once, she was considered part of their family. She was considered someone worth fighting for.

But at the same time, it was like she entered a whole different world.

Disruptors?

Invaders from another world?

Magical Girls made in labs?

Who *were* these Princesses? The bigger question, should Prism Cherry inform the Land of Magic?

They’re not registered in the names of the Land of Magic, and they definitely aren’t considered Magical Girls.

What would you call them, then? Illegal Magical Girls? Was that even possible?

Cherry originally wanted to help them, as well as find out what this strange phenomenon of these new Magical Girls were. However, the more she spent time with them, the more she became close to them.

Despite not being one of the ‘Princess’-type Magical Girls, with a tiara and whatnot, Cherry was welcomed by them.

Despite being outclassed in combat, Cherry was welcomed as well.

Cherry wanted to prove herself, definitely. She had a long way to go, but she found family. In a way, they might be family as well.

They’re not blood-related, Prism Cherry already asked that.

They said that they were given the ability to become Magical Girls in a facility, met each other, formed the base, and began bonding.

These girls weren’t related, but they were definitely family.

Even so…

There’s something that ties them together.

The Princess title.

The tiara.

Quake had a dragon tail, Inferno had a scorpion stinger.

Deluge had her skirt in the shape of white waves, Tempest had leaves around her body.

They were somehow designed this way. As Magical Girls were usually created based on personality, someone *purposefully* created these Princesses this way.

When Cherry asked, Inferno answered that a Professor of some kind gave them these abilities. Apparently, the Professor is busy though, and hasn’t shown up.

Cherry was afraid that if she reported to the Land of Magic, they’d capture the Princesses somehow. She didn’t want to endanger her new friends.

Besides, there was combat training tonight.

Combat Training seems like a bad idea for Cherry.

The four Princesses weren't holding back.

Quake dodged a boomerang shot and as Tempest was already mid-flight, Quake swung her hammer, hitting Tempest in the face, sending her flying halfway across the arena.

30 meters in radius, with the walls surrounding them underground.

Tempest slammed into a wall.

Cherry gasped and covered her mouth in shock. A blow like that should've smashed her brain in.

Inferno took the chance to move in. She had a flaming scimitar, and her hair seemed to be made of flames as well.

Her Scimitar clashed with Quake's hammer, and as she struggled, Deluge pierced Quake in the back with her trident.

The stab should've hit Quake's spine. Deluge then kneed Quake in the torso, slammed her head with the shaft of her trident, and immediately countered Inferno's blazing flames with her own water-based powers.

These four weren't even holding back.

What *were* these Princesses?

After training, they continued to talk as normal.

It was late at night, and the girls were resting a bit.

"Why don't you join us, next time, Cherry?" asked Deluge.

"I… kinda want to, but… it looks pretty dangerous," said Cherry. She knows that one hit from those Princesses would probably kill her.

"Huh? Aren't Magical Girls super strong, though? We'd barely feel anything, right?" asked Inferno.

"Maybe Cherry's just kinda weak?" asked Tempest.

Inferno bonked Tempest in the head, “Don’t say stuff like that in front of her.”

“Ow… sorry.”

Prism Cherry laughed.

Quake came over to Cherry, “If you ever want to join us, you’re always welcome! You’re part of the Pure Elements now, Cherry!”

Prism Cherry nodded, “Thank you so much!”

All the Princesses smiled at Cherry. She was welcome here.

She really didn’t want to report to the Land of Magic now. She was welcome here. If she did… She’d lose this all. They’d lose it all.

These girls weren’t doing anything wrong, either.

There was a moment of silence, where everyone just awkwardly smiled at each other. Tempest broke the silence,

“Well… now that we had a moment of sappy silence, let’s switch topics. Why does Inferno look like she’s wearing underwear with her form?”

“WHAT?” shouted Inferno with an embarrassed face.

“You’re wearing a garterbelt, Inferno. I’d say that’s pretty embarrassing,” snickered Tempest.

“Y-You realize that Deluge has the same thing, right?” shouted Inferno.

“Nah, she’s wearing a swimsuit. She’s good.”

Deluge scratched her head. She turned over to Cherry, “These two are like this, sometimes. You’ll get used to it,” said Deluge.

Teasing, playing around, combat training.

Family.

The Pure Elements were family to Cherry.

☆ **Princess Deluge – Nami Aoki**

Nami Aoki had been known in Middle School as a bright and refreshing girl.

She was popular and nice to all her friends. Always ready to socialize at a moment's notice. She was also quite polite herself.

But things weren't always this way.

In Elementary School, Nami was far more outgoing and rough than she is in Middle School.

Nami barely used any honorifics when addressing people in Elementary, she always seemed to use slang, and was practically casual all the way through.

Every day before school, her mother would politely tell her,

"Have a nice day, Nami!"

Nami would reply non-chalantly,

"Yeah, mhmm, sure, mom."

She wasn't the type to just be nice for the sake of being nice. She'd rather do it her own way, and not care much for how she behaved.

Then, sometime at school. Probably because of some weird thing, or maybe this girl had just pissed someone off, but one of the kids had started a rumor about one of Nami's friends.

The girl lived in Nami's neighborhood, and was a close friend of Nami's. She was a nice girl, really. However, none of that mattered with the rumors.

That's all it takes, a rumor.

She couldn't even remember what it was about. It probably was some stupid thing that an elementary school student would find important.

The cause didn't matter. It was the effect that it had on Nami that mattered.

That rumor made everyone seem to shun her friend.

Nami herself knew about the rumor. Because she wasn't the target of the bullying.

She heard all the talking behind her friend's back. Nami herself wasn't sure if the rumors were true, but as a kid, she became distant with her friend.

She was afraid of what people would think if she befriended someone like that.

Social pressure, at such a young age.

The girl couldn't take it, and then she eventually moved out, after bawling her eyes in school, begging for it to stop.

Nami felt sorry, but she also felt guilty.

That day, at home, Nami had realized that she may have just lost a close friend, because she wasn't there for her. Instead, following what others have said.

But she also realized how easily a rumor or bullying could lead to something like this, especially for children.

Nami became more socially aware after that.

She became nicer to people, less rough and casual. She was afraid.

She was afraid of being alone.

She had taken her friend for granted, and now she left her. She regretted that decision every day of her life.

So now, she wanted to make sure she was loyal to her friends.

But although this is the case, she was still afraid that she would leave a bad impression on others. This made her slightly more influenced by the other kids.

She was popular because she was so nice in school. Popular because she was flexible, able to blend into most crowds, taking the first step in a conversation.

Nami didn't want to be hated. She wanted people to befriend her. In return, she'll stay loyal to her friends. She won't discriminate, and she'll always be nice to them.

That was normal, right?

One day, after school, she received a text message on her phone.

Magical Girls Wanted.

Nami's heart sank. Was someone playing a prank on her? Was this just teasing, or was someone trying to make a fool of her?

This is possibly just spam mail, but who would do something like that?

Nami considered deleting it, but…

…She desperately wanted to know. If this was a prank, who would want to do something like that to Nami?

Was this a friendly, "Ha, I gotcha!" prank, or a ploy to make a fool of Nami in front of the whole school?

The text asked Nami to reply with a name.

Nami did so. Her curiosity outshining her common sense to just delete the message. How far will they take this?

She waited, and a few days later, she got a reply.

She had almost forgotten about it, honestly.

The reply contained instructions to go to a site, 3PM, where she will receive a briefing to become a Magical Girl.

This must be the part where she gets pranked for real. They must've spent the days to set up the whole thing.

Still…

…Nami was curious.

☆ **Princess Inferno – Akari Hiyama**

When she was a kid, Akari loved to build secret bases. A place where they could hide out from the world.

She and six friends decided to make one. They ventured out to the woods one day, and found a great spot in the forest.

A tree trunk, where they would build a treehouse together.

Akari was in charge of materials, and the other kids were very athletic. Enough to help her out with creating the treehouse.

When the kids finished building it, Akari was proud of their accomplishment. Together, they created something wonderful.

They carved their name on a tree nearby. All six of them, to commemorate this event.

Akari was in Elementary then, now, she was a Freshman in High School.

She wondered if kids still built stuff like that nowadays. She asked her younger sister, who was still in Elementary, about things like this.

Her sister said she never built something like that in her life.

A bit disappointed, Akari thought about heading out and hiking towards the woods. She wanted to see if her treehouse was still there.

She knew the path. She remembered it completely. Though, she lost contact with those six other friends of hers.

Most of them either moved out, drifted away, or just stopped talking.

Akari made her way through the shrubbery and bushes. Past the trees. She remembered the tiny path that she believed only kids would get through.

She hated her past self for that. Akari had to crawl down.

A mantis was sitting on a leaf. Akari swatted it away. She crawled on all fours, and came out to the other side.

Her right knee felt a bit sore, but she was used to that.

Once she got out, she saw the engraving on the tree. The carving of their names. All six of them, still there.

And she saw the treehouse.

Well, it's technically some ruins now.

The house itself has fallen. Years of weather effects must've made it crumble out here in the silent forest.

Still, the nostalgia is there. Akari felt the wood of the fallen treehouse. Memories would come back to her when she touched it.

She was glad that she built it. It's like uncovering an ancient tomb of a once great civilization.

The thought of that made Akari chuckle to herself.

She checked her bag. Pepper spray, a stun gun, a small baton. She was prepared to venture out to enemy territory.

She checked her cellphone again. That one text. She got it a few days ago, and thought it was just a prank. She was the type to want to expose pranksters, so she played along.

Magical Girls Wanted.

When she got a reply, she became even more worried that this might be a kidnapping attempt. She figured this must've been sent to various numbers throughout the city. The address was located. It was too obvious for a kidnapping attempt, but Akari will try.

If someone shows up to try and hurt her, she was prepared.

She bid farewell to a childhood memory, and she descended down the mountainside, away from the forest.

She had to walk a bit slowly.

Akari was an athlete. She was an expert at running, and she joined the track team at an early age.

One day, an incident in her Middle School track team ended that career.

They were in the mountains. It was a schoolwide tournament. Everyone and their family came to see.

Akari was trying to practice for her eventual run. She practiced outdoors, when it was raining and stormy.

During her run, she slipped, and she came tumbling down the mountainside. In the process, she broke her right knee.

She bled a lot, and she screamed and cried.

It took weeks for it to heal, but even now, Akari was unable to run as fast as she could before.

She finished off her makeup in the train station toilet. Finishing up with eyeliner before finally being satisfied.

Your looks are your first impression. Sometimes, looks alone can get you to places that you couldn't, so it was important to have your best appearance at all times.

She rode the train two stations ahead, and went to the address.

The building that she was supposed to go to was a strange one. A Municipal building, unused now, but it used to be bustling with activity a couple years ago.

Definitely suspicious.

She knocked on the door.

"It's open!" cried someone from inside.

The voice of a girl, and it sounded like she was her age, too. Magical Girl? No way.

She entered, and she saw a large room with desks, like a classroom, all set up. She saw three other girls standing in the center of the room.

One of the girls seemed to be her age, but she didn't recognize her. She was probably a Middle School girl.

Another was definitely older than her. She looked to be in her College years.

The last one…

“Aka-Nee-San!? What are *you* doing here?”

“…Mei-Chan!?”

Mei Higashionna. Or Mei-Chan for short, was Akari’s sister’s friend. Elementary school student, fairly young.

“It’s obvious, right? I’m here to become a Magical Girl! What are *you* doing here?”

“Well… Er… Same as you!”

“Wha? Waiiiit, weren’t you the one that told us Santa Claus wasn’t real that one time in Christmas?”

“…He *isn’t*!”

“Then why’d you come here? After all that talk about no proof and stuff, I can’t believe you actually came to be a Magical Girl!”

“I don’t believe that, either! It’s cause… I wanted to make sure whoever’s behind this gets a proper beatdown, is all!”

Mei looked at her suspiciously. Akari really didn’t know what to say at this point.

Strangely enough, she was saved by the voice of a woman who opened a door from the other side.

“Ah, wonderful! You’re all here!”

The woman seemed elegant, in her 50s maybe. A lab coat embroidered with flowers.

Mei gasped in awe, “Whoa… cool design”

“Why thank you! Now then, I assume you’re here because you all want to be Magical Girls? Let’s begin, then!”

☆ **Princess Tempest – Mei Higashionna**

Darn it!

Why'd she have to show up, too?

Mei was furious that Akari had shown up to the meeting place. She didn't really have a good relationship with Akari.

Well…

…Maybe that's not exactly true.

Mei disliked her.

Mostly because Akari always seems to get all the attention. It comes with being older, and being a teenager.

Mei was just a young kid.

Akari dyed her hair almost every few weeks, changing her highlights whenever she felt like it. It was as if the girl had a changing sense of fashion.

Mei's classmates talk a lot about Akari, too. It didn't help that Mei's best friend was Akari's younger sister.

But things like that didn't exactly bother Mei. Well… it did, but it was nothing compared to what was the most infuriating to Mei.

There was a boy in Middle School. Second year.

His name was Sho.

Sho was kind to the kids. He volunteered at Mei's elementary to teach them, and play with them.

He had a nice and kind smile, and everyone loved him so much.

Mei wanted to hang out with him, to talk with him as well. However, Mei was too young. The age gap was too large. She didn't think he would even notice her, let alone befriend her.

One incident made Mei extremely jealous.

In the mountains, about a year ago, there was a track team competition. It was schoolwide, and Akari was participating.

Her sister came along, and Mei tagged along as well.

Sho, being the caring guy that he was, also came to watch the competition.

For some reason or another, Akari decided to train in the stormy rain. One thing led to another, and she fell.

She fell off and broke her knee.

She cried and screamed, and the teachers as well as Sho came over to help her.

Mei felt jealous of that.

Akari was always the center of attention. It was because she was older, and it was because she was always so beautiful looking.

The battle was weighed in Akari's favor. It was a handicapped match from the start. How could Mei ever hope to compete with something like that?

So when Mei got the text about being a Magical Girl, she was extremely excited.

She wanted to accept that. She talked with her friends about Magical Girls and their shows the next day.

Sometimes Magical Girls transform and change their bodies.

Sometimes they look older than they do before.

The more they talked about Magical Girls, the more excited Mei was.

So now she was here. She'd finally have a leg-up against Akari. She'd become a Magical Girl, she'd look like a teenager, and she can finally talk to Sho!

The perfect plan…

…but Akari showed up, too.

Why does the universe do this to her?

"…Now then, take these gems."

Mei hadn't been paying attention.

The woman said something about… stuff… or things. Mei had been remembering old days.

She saw something on the blackboard.

Magical Girls shouldn't reveal their identity

Magical Girls exist to fight evil

Magical Girls have unique powers

Okay. Summarized.

The woman in front of her placed four colored gems in their palms. She also placed four hand mirrors as well.

There was a 100 Yen price tag on the mirror.

Being a Magical Girl costs 100 Yen?

"Uh… what's the mirrors for?" asked Mei.

"Oh, those aren't magical. They're for you to confirm your form changes. It's the gems. Now then, listen closely," asked the woman.

Mei took a look at the gems that they had. There were four different colors for each gem.

Blue for the Middle School girl.

Red for Akari.

Yellow for the older College girl.

And White for Mei.

“Place the gems on your forehead. Imagine the Magical Girl you wanted to be, close your eyes, and say, *Princess Mode, On!* Doesn’t matter if you scream it or whisper it. Go ahead!”

The other girls nervously placed the gems on their foreheads.

Mei happily placed the gem on hers, and closed her eyes.

Should Mei shout it out, or whisper it?

Cutie Healer shouts out her transformation. She’s not afraid of bad guys, and she’s one of the most popular of the Cutie series.

However, a more recent season, Cutie Blade, has the Cutie softly, but strongly, say it out. That being said, Cutie Blade was a lot darker than Cutie Healer.

Mei certainly didn’t want to become a darker version of her ideal Magical Girl.

Then, it’s settled. The orthodox way.

Mei shouted out,

“Princess Mode, On!”

Mei opened her eyes. She didn’t feel any different, yet she knows something changed. What did?

She took her hand mirror, and she looked at her own reflection.

A beautiful girl was staring at her.

Mei moved the mirror around. She was wearing a white dress, with leaves covering her body. Her hair was shaped like wings, and the leaves extended behind her. Two green blades were attached to her hips.

She removed the blades, and she found out she can attach them to become a boomerang.

The other three girls have changed as well.

A blue water-like Magical Girl with a trident.

A red fiery Magical Girl with a scimitar and a scorpion stinger.

A black-suited Magical Girl with a gigantic spiked hammer and a dragon’s tail.

“YESSSS!!!”

Mei was a Magical Girl, and she looked older too! Like a teenager!

The rest of the girls were gasping and confused, but Mei was happy. She was very, very happy.

“Congratulations! Princess Deluge, Princess Inferno, Princess Tempest, and Princess Quake, you’re now… the Pure Elements!” said the woman.

☆ **Princess Quake – Chiko Saitou**

Chiko couldn’t believe that she was a Magical Girl.

She had a lizard’s tail, and was holding a large hammer with her non-muscular hands.

Was this a fake hammer?

She casually slammed it to the ground, and the ground cracked and shook, like an earthquake had hit it.

Nope. This is real.

As a college student, she was used to e-mail scams and other text-based pranks. She didn’t even bat her eyes when she saw the text coming towards her.

She ran a personal blog in College. Sometimes she exposed major deals and scandals, and got a little extra cash from leaking the sources to news sites.

That’s why she decided to follow through with this supposed scam.

Who would’ve thought that she actually became a real Magical Girl.

The other girls were surprised and shocked, but one of them, Princess Tempest, was shouting in joy.

Of course, she is still a child. Children are amazing. No matter how absurd the situation is, you can always count on them to be bright.

Actually, there was a second reason why Chiko came to this place.

These scams obviously targeted younger kids, as no adult or someone her age would probably believe this kind of message. So, just in case any children comes here, she wanted to protect them.

She couldn't bear seeing kids hurt at all.

Chiko had never really experienced what one would call a childhood.

Most people tend to think that kids are cute.

Aw, you're such a cutie

What a good girl you are

You're gonna grow up big and strong

It was the default reaction to adults who saw children playing. Especially when parents take their kids over to other parents' houses.

Chiko's father wasn't like that, however.

"Stand up straight. Don't answer anyone. Just focus."

Chiko couldn't exactly have much freedom. She was too busy being told what to do by her father.

Not only that, but during her younger years, Chiko had a growth spurt.

She was taller than the other children, often being mistaken for a Middle Schooler when she was still younger.

Her nickname in school was *Gi-Ko*, short for Giant Chiko.

Of course, she was about average size now, but her father, combined with her growth spurt, meant that she wasn't really ever treated like a kid when she was… well, a kid.

It didn't bother her while growing up, but now, she longed for that kind of childhood. She wanted to be happy as a kid.

So now, she wants to make sure that children are also happy.

She loved children, and wanted to protect them. The thought of anyone harming them would get her angry.

She lost her childhood, no one else should, too.

In her college days, she remembers going to the park, where she could see kids playing. Watching kids being kids filled her with joy inside.

Their innocence was what made Chiko believe that there's always hope for the future.

She knows that people aren't born bad, but they often make bad decisions because of their circumstances.

So, to protect the world's future, she had to protect the children of the future.

She had a sketchbook, where she would often draw kids playing and being kids. Pages of pages of that, just drawings of children being happy.

Unfortunately, Chiko also knew the implications, as she's always been asked this before.

Why are you so obsessed with children?

Do you stalk kids?

Chiko… you're not… a pedophile, are you?

The word made Chiko angry.

If there's one thing that Chiko hated the most in the world. The one thing that she would not tolerate, it's pedophilia.

She doesn't want to make children miserable. She doesn't want to hurt the kids. She doesn't even want to scare the kids.

She wanted to protect them.

She just wanted to see them be happy.

Unfortunately, even her family became concerned, and sometimes, if people saw her sketchbook, or anything resembling that, they'd always come to the same conclusion.

Stalker

Pedophile

Your obsession is disgusting

These are only people who knew Chiko personally.

Chiko wanted to be around children, yes… She wanted to protect them, and she liked watching them play in the park…

…But she knows that her actions will always have implications, whether she believes it or not.

As much as she hates to admit this, she knows that the one thing preventing someone from calling her a pedophile her is her gender.

As a woman, strangers don't mind if she seems to be watching children and drawing them.

If she were a man, they'd immediately report her.

She looked up jobs online. A nursery school? A babysitter?

She didn't exactly want to stay in that job, but it was one way to take care of the young ones without being called weird.

It was a way to bring smiles to children without others telling you that you're just a creepy stalker.

Chiko was truly conflicted. If a child was really scared of her, she would leave them alone. She only wanted what's best for all kids. Despite what others might tell her.

As long as she can protect the smiles of the children, she'll be happy. That's all that matters.

Their transformations were cancelled.

"Aw man…" cried out Tempest.

“Apologies, but this was only a trial period. I wanted to know if you all are willing to go the extra step and become real Magical Girls. If you choose to leave, your memory will be erased and you’ll be free to go. Choose to stay, and you become real Magical Girls,” said the woman.

“I’m staying then!” yelled out Tempest.

“…I can’t believe it. I think I can run again… I’m staying too,” said Inferno.

“Me too!” said Deluge.

Well then… Looks like Chiko’s made up her mind.

As a Magical Girl, she’ll protect the lives of innocents, the smiles of kids around the world, and, with someone as young as Tempest in the team, she couldn’t, not in good faith, just abandon her, when she knows that this might be dangerous.

She’ll be a protector too.

“I choose to be a Magical Girl as well,” said Chiko.

Interlude

☆ **7753**

7753 heard the news.

Her boss, Pfle, had her manor attacked a few nights ago. She survived the initial attack, and the Land of Magic eventually sent reinforcements.

Unfortunately, the attacker’s identity was still unknown.

The Examination Division is investigating the attacks now, and Pfle was under house arrest, for her protection.

Her manor was in ruins as well, but Pfle was safe.

Pfle was a strange boss.

She was a very capable and efficient Magical Girl. Since she was high in the Human Resources Division. However, her motives were hard to understand.

There were times where she would order something and not give any context. Her orders always seemed to end up in something working, so 7753 had learned to just trust her.

Still… her motives were difficult to understand.

Just now, 7753 had received an unsigned mail in her mailbox. One marked “OPEN” and another marked “DON’T OPEN”.

She opened the one marked OPEN.

Head to this location. Talk to the person there. Give them the other envelope. Tell them to open that one.

She recognized this. This must be Pfle trying to send her a message.
7753 went over to her living room. In there was her housemate, and friend, Tepsekemei.

Tepsekemei was floating around freely, reading a book.

“Hey, Mei.”

“Hello.”

“How’re you doing?”

“Learning. Reading. Mei wants to be smart.”

“Good, good. Having any trouble?”

“…No… Maybe… No…”

7753 chuckled.

“Listen, I’m gonna be gone for a while, okay?”
Mei stopped reading.

“Will you come back?”

“Yeah. Don’t worry. I’ll be back.”

“Okay… Mei will wait.”

“There’s food if you ever need it. I still have my phone, so call me if you need anything, okay?”

“Okay. Be safe, please.”

“I will.”

7753 transformed into her Magical Girl form.

Normally, Magical Girls only transformed if they’re going to a battlefield, but in this case, it’s best to be safe.

It’s also good to leave Tepsekemei here. She didn’t want to endanger her. 7753 then travelled to the location.

She wanted to visit Mana, but Mana might not be ready for anything extreme just yet. She’s still recovering, after all.

She took the bus. Thankfully, her Magical Girl form was still explainable to humans, if a little extravagant.

The location was somewhere out of the city. An inn of sorts. She opened the door, and looked around.

The room was dark, and she saw a silhouette in the distance.

“My, my… I certainly didn’t expect to see *you* again.”

7753 felt like time had stopped completely.

That voice.

It can’t be.

The person walked forward. A hood, stars decorating it, and some horn-like shapes protruding as well.

Pythie Frederica.

“What are you doing here,” asked 7753.

“I should be asking you the same thing. I was called here,” replied Frederica.
Both were called here? Pfle had called them both here.

A cooperation?

7753 didn’t like it. Frederica was poison. Even though you’re using poison to kill your enemies, it’s still poison.

“Why don’t we take a seat,” asked Frederica as she sat down on a table.

“Fine,” replied 7753.

Frederica poured green tea on two cups and passed one to 7753. 7753 drank it reluctantly.

She used her goggles to scan Frederica.

She confirmed that her stats haven’t increased or decreased.

She confirmed that her magic was the same.

She *also* confirmed that she was under some restrictions. Wedin’s promises were still in effect.

Promises: Cannot directly harm, or perform a harmful action towards 7753, Tepsekemei, and Mana.

Promises: Cannot lie to 7753, Tepsekemei, and Mana.

Promises: Cannot use her powers against 7753, Tepsekemei, and Mana.

Now 7753 understands. Pfle wants to use Frederica. She needs 7753, because that’s the only way Frederica will be able to cooperate without presenting a threat.

She can’t hurt 7753, nor could she lie to her.

She couldn’t lie.

“Tell me, something, Frederica.”

“Hmm?”

“Did you kill Wedin?”

7753 remembered that the last time she saw Wedin was with Frederica. The two of them killed Rain Pou.

But Wedin was also dead.

“I didn’t kill her,” said Frederica with a smile.

“You know what I’m talking about. Did you cause her death?”

“She put innocent lives before herself.”

7753 stood up, and punched Frederica.

“…You deserved that.”

“Ngh… Possibly. Well, then. Are you satisfied? I’m sure your boss didn’t send you here to punch me.”

7753 took a deep breath.

Frederica was poison.

Using Frederica was like using poison.

At the same time, during the B-City incident, 7753 also used Frederica’s powers. Mana and 7753 used her as well.

What’s the difference now?

7753 had no right to say that.

This was also an emergency.

Pfle's motives were hard to understand, but 7753 knows that she always had some kind of plan.

If anything happens, 7753 will be there to prevent anything from going wrong.

Now she was glad that she left Tepsekemei at home.

She slid an envelope to Frederica. "I was told to give you that. Read it. Follow it."

7753 didn't look at the contents. She was trustworthy like that.

"Promise me something, Frederica."

"Hmm? You realize you're not Wedin, right?"

"No, but you can't lie to me, so promise me something."

"Alright, then."

"Promise me you won't betray us."

"Of course!"

"Promise me you won't hurt any innocent people."

"I will care for them as much as I care for my own hair strands."

7753 sighed deeply.

"Alright… Let's get started, then."